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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001877

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NP/CBM, NEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/26/2029

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY TURKISH REACTION TO AUSTRALIA GROUP
PLENARY REGIONAL NONPROLIFERATION PROPOSALS

REF: STATE 68716

(U) Classified by Acting Economic Counselor Andrew Snow for reasons 1.4 B, D, and H.

(C) Econoff delivered reftel points on promoting adherence to Australia Group (AG) guidelines, enhanced outreach to key countries and relations with Syria to Bulent Meric, head of the Arms Control/Disarmament Department at MFA, on March 30. Meric responded that he would study our paper, but offered a preliminary objection to our proposal that AG participants not improve bilateral relations with Syria until Syria improves its chemical-biological weapons nonproliferation behavior. Meric said that Turkey sought improved ties with Syria, while simultaneously urging the GOS to cease efforts to develop WMD. He stated that dialogue with Syria gives Turkey the opportunity to press the case for Syria to adhere to international norms and to address our concerns on proliferation. Meric contended that the GOT had consulted with Israel on this, and that the GOI was "satisfied" with Turkey's dialogue with Syria. Econoff responded that the USG views continued Syrian proliferation efforts as incompatible with improved bilateral relations.
EDELMAN